

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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Field Notes on Iowa birds, book news, and historical or biographical material pertaining to Iowa ornithology are desired for publication.

EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE  
WINTHROP, IOWA



#### SCENES IN IOWA STATE PARKS

In Iowa's fine chain of more than thirty-five State Parks, bird lovers are assured of having near at home regions where timber and lake land will remain in unspoiled, original loveliness, and bird life will be encouraged and protected, for all future time. Upper scene, Palisades-Kepler State Park, Linn County; lower, Backbone State Park, Delaware County. Both photographs were furnished by Iowa State Board of Conservation.

## COMBATING WILD GEESE

By ELLIS E. WILSON

"Soar away, wild geese,  
Don't take our wheat,  
Fly away, wild geese,  
Don't eat our oats,  
Go away, wild geese,  
And float like boats  
On the lakes and rivers."

Expressed in words of similar sentiment brother and I shouted at the wild geese one springlike day in March, 1866. The summer previous our father had broken a parcel of Iowa prairie land in Bennington Township, Blackhawk County, which afterwards became the Wilson homestead. At that date there were numerous small lakes in the township which have since completely disappeared. Now, where migratory fowls formerly nested and pools of water once stagnated, farm crops are cultivated. Usually most of the glebe breaking was done during the last days of May and the month of June. Thru the remainder of the summer the sod lay uncultivated and uncropped until the following spring, altho often a small tract would be planted to sod-corn which was usually harvested for fodder. The turf was cut with a straight or rolling coulter and turned by the plowshare. During the summertime the wild grass roots decayed. At the date mentioned, the pioneer homes were far apart, perhaps one house on every fourth section of land.

Father had gone alone the day previous to the wild goose battle, to this parcel of ground broken in June of 1865, to harrow the decomposed sod, using what was known as a V-shaped drag. Returning home in the evening he remarked to brother and me that the wild birds of the water-wilderness were flying toward the northern streams, lakes and lagoons, possibly clear to the rolling billows that chafe the Arctic's shore, in great flocks and kept continually alighting near where he was at work, seeking food. They were traveling towards a summer hatching sanctuary in a country no white man knew, where they could nest undisturbed around quiet inland waters. The noiseless, barbed, flint-tipped bowshaft of the Indian was not feared.

Soon it would be necessary for us to accompany him to the new farm land located two miles east across the prairie from where we were then living, in order to chase away the wild web-footed birds, the heralds of spring; they were voracious eaters and would quickly encircle and settle around him and pick up the seed grain with their spoonlike bills as fast as it was scattered. The sowing was done by hand, the wheat lying on top of the soil until covered by the harrow.

We went with him on the following day. The geese were flying northward in large numbers, and so filled was the air as they floated along that their skyward assemblage cast shadows on the earth like moving clouds. As soon as they observed the team and wagon, they dropped from high in the sky during their timely flight onto the nearby cultivated ground. They seemed to have no fear of us. When father started scattering seed from a sack thrown over his left shoulder they followed near him eagerly eating the grain. Father would hoot them hence, but they would make a circular flight and come back. Then brother and I, armed with sticks and clubs, came forth from our place of refuge under the wagon and endeavored by waving and throwing the shillalabs to scare the geese away. But they stretched out their long necks, hissed, uttered sharp sibilant sounds, and flapped their wings at us in a threatening manner. Hastening back to our covert under the wagon, we secured a new supply of sticks and filled our pockets with



dornicks, then sallied forth again like Indian warriors, with a weapon in each hand, swinging them around our heads. Again sticks and stones on feathery armor clashed, but the massed flocks were fighters. The wild goose battle was on. A surprised and frightened few took to flight, while others uttering terrorizing screeches fought us with their wings and we flew, but not in the air. The team consisted of an old horse and a young mule. The horse was quiet but the mule shook his head, heehawed, wigwagged his long ears and kicked wildly at the hissing wing-flappers.

All day father broadcast by hand and harrowed the wheat into the ground and all the while we fought the fearless pinioned pilgrims of the sky. With father's assistance we were final victors in the continuing dispute, for-as soon as we had chased away one flock, which would fly on to the north, another coming from the south would appear. When the day ended the field was sown to wheat and covered. During the persistent combats, often a shiny black gander would make us scurry to the protection of the wagon.

The day previous, father had taken his gun along and attempted to kill one, but when the load was discharged, the percussion-cap tube blew out of the gunbarrel. That ended the shooting. At that period the report of a gun scarcely frightened them. However, they soon became wary and their persistent boldness shortly changed to constant fear. After a few seasons, they seldom bothered the farmer when sowing crops. Continual shooting by the early settlers made them dread the sight of a man with a gun. Only a clever hunter could get close enough to a flock to bag one. Sentinel birds were invariably listening and watching ready to sound a danger signal. In later years an adroit nimrod would conceal himself in a clump of grass or reeds and shoot as the game flew low overhead. The use of decoys was previously common but now forbidden by law. Formerly the northward flight in springtime's glory lasted only a few days, but it often happened that a cold wave would catch them in their long wing-trek and they would turn southward before a driving storm from the north. When calm and sunshine came again they would immediately reverse their volation. A pair of them nested in a marshy place on the Wilson homestead in the spring of 1866.

The Wild or Canada Geese were very large and swanlike in appearance, moving quickly afoot or on wing. The upper part of their bodies was brownish black and the lower dark gray shading to white, with a white patch on each cheek and which extended down under the throat, black bill and legs, with blackish necks and heads. The feathers were light and fluffy and prized by the pioneer women for making mattresses, cushions and pillows. The fowls were audaciously bold in flight and seemed to be the bird masters of the air.

When making their seasonal flights each group has a courageous commander who is followed by the fowls arranged in the shape of a letter V, each head and wing where it should be, the leader at the apex, forming a wedge-shaped adjustment, their snowy pinions beating time with melodious honking. To the early settlers it was an exciting and interesting skyward panorama to vision the martial throngs in their magnificent aerial migrations. Their flights thru the ages have remained the same, for their manual of military maneuvers has never been altered since given them by the Omnipotent. The flocks composed of several hundred birds, moving in unity, during their journeys thru the trackless sky, often had a spread of a quarter of a mile; usually they numbered about 100, with fifty on each side of the conformation.

Waterloo, Iowa

## A BLACKBIRD ROOST

By HENRY S. CONARD

For some years past the grove of elms in the northeast corner of the Grinnell College campus has been an autumn roost for blackbirds. The birds come in large flocks, which I have no means of estimating, roosting in the tree tops over night and scattering over the country by day. They are nearly all believed to be Bronzed Grackles, but I cannot vouch for the exact identity. There is always a large mortality among them. So in September, 1931, I hired a boy of absolute integrity and reliability to collect and count the dead birds daily. The following tabulation is his report.

The number of birds collected, "three bushels" plus 451, quite surprised me. I have never seen a single dead Crow at a Crow roost—I have visited but two—and we never find dead Robins on the campus, though for some weeks during the blackbird season hundreds of Robins roost in the adjacent trees.

It would be interesting to try to determine the cause of the deaths. We were unable to correlate it with the weather. And no one had the time and knowledge to make autopsies. Perhaps somebody knows all about it, and will tell us.

Our work began Sept. 18. Three days previous an employe of the College collected three bushels of dead birds, according to his own statement. Our collections were:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Sept. 18—75 birds, on one half of the area.  | Oct. 10—8. Ground dry.   |
| Sept. 19—100 birds. This lot and the one above made one clean-up of the area.  | Oct. 11, 12—23. Rain Oct. 10; 11th cold.   |
| Sept. 20, 21,—34, two of which had apparently been missed on the 19th. There was a heavy storm after 5 p. m. Sept. 20. | Oct. 13—15. Cold and Rain.   |
| Sept. 22—8 birds.  | Oct. 14—6. Cool and damp.  |
| Sept. 23—14, including 2 apparently old ones (missed before).  | Oct. 15—9. Cool; some rain.  |
| Sept. 24—0. First cold night.  | Oct. 16—17. Cool; no rain.   |
| Sept. 25—7.  | Oct. 17—16. Clear and cool.  |
| Sept. 26—4.  | Oct. 18, 19—8, including 2 Redwings; clear, warmer.  |
| Sept. 27, 28—19. Warmer weather  | Oct. 20—8. Dry and warm.   |
| Sept. 29—2. Fair and mild.   | Oct. 21—0. Dry and warm.   |
| Sept. 30—1. Rain.  | Oct. 22—5. Slight rain.  |
| Oct. 1—2, one being missed previously.   | Oct. 23—2. Dry.  |
| Oct. 2—3. Fair weather; ground still damp.   | Oct. 24—26—5.  |
| Oct. 3—3. Fair weather; ground nearly dry.   | Oct. 27—1. Flocks seemed to be smaller.  |
| Oct. 4, 5—7, from only one half of area.   | Oct. 28—4. Colder.   |
| Oct. 6—3, two from side missed on 5th; rainy.  | Oct. 29—2. Cold and wet.   |
| Oct. 7—6. Violent storm during night.  | Oct. 30—1. Cold and wet.   |
| Oct. 8—1, a Redwing; ground damp.  | Oct. 31—1. Warmer.   |
| Oct. 9—2.  | Nov. 1, 2—1. Warmer, dry.  |
|  | Nov. 3—1. Clear, warm.   |
|  | Nov. 4—0.  |
|  | Nov. 5—4. Clear, cooler.   |
|  | Nov. 6—1.  |
|  | Nov. 7—1.  |
|  | Nov. 8, 9—0. Leaves were being raked and some birds may have been raked up with leaves; very warm. |
|  | Nov. 10—3. Cooler; rain.   |
|  | Nov. 11, 12—0. Cooler; no rain.  |



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|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Nov. 13—1. Cool; hard rain.   | Nov. 24—2. Much rain; cleared    |
| Nov. 14, 15—2. Cool; wet.     | at night and cooled to 26F.      |
| Nov. 16—0.                    | Nov. 25—0. 12F; still have large |
| Nov. 17—1. Fair and warm.     | flocks.                          |
| Nov. 18—4. Wet and colder.    | Nov. 26, 27—no record.           |
| Nov. 19—4. Wet and cool.      | Nov. 28—1. Small flocks.         |
| Nov. 20, 21—3. Cool and damp. | Nov. 29—0. No birds rested here  |
| Nov. 22, 23—0. Cool and rain. | on the night of Nov. 28 or since |
|                               | that time.                       |

Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa

## GENERAL NOTES

**Wild Turkeys in Iowa in 1870.**—I was born and raised in Wapello County, Iowa, where my father lived on a ranch about six miles south of the town of Ottumwa. At that time the southern part of the country was almost a solid forest with just a few clearings. The timber was full of underbrush, and the trees were mostly jack and white oak, hickory, black walnut, and a few elm.

About the year 1869 or 1870, as I remember, I was sent out on an errand from our place to a neighboring farm. The road lay through the woods, of course, and the leaves were off the trees. As I was walking down this road, my attention was attracted to leaves rustling in the woods. I stopped to listen and saw a flock of Wild Turkeys coming out of the woods and crossing the road. I counted seventy-five of them.

There was fine shooting in the fall of these early years. The settlers had all the turkey they cared to eat. This continued for some eight years, until about 1877, when they became quite scarce. There were also a few deer in this region during this period, until the timber was cleared off. The turkeys ate corn and oats from the field, besides what they gleaned in the woods. Oats were cradled and bound by hand. Turkeys always stripped the top bundles. They were ravenous eaters, and ate grasshoppers then as they do now. They roosted in the tops of tall trees near streams. My father used to go to the roost before daylight and shoot as soon as it was light enough to see, but one turkey was all he ever got, as the rest were off and away at the report of the gun. I remember my father once shooting a turkey from the back door. Some turkeys were flying by the house, and he had time to take the gun from above the kitchen door and get one bird.

One time we found a nest of turkey eggs in the woods and hatched them under a domestic hen. Ten eggs hatched. The Wild Turkeys were usually fat and averaged ten to twelve pounds in weight. They were a darker color than the tame (bronzed) turkeys and were more trim looking. Later we raised the tame turkeys which used to get very fat from feeding in the hog-lot. The day we moved away from Wapello County we killed our old gobbler which was then three years old and weighed forty pounds, live weight. We couldn't get him into the oven so we roasted him in the wash-boiler on top of the stove.

We then moved to Ringgold County where I lived for the next twenty-two years. This was a prairie county and the land was mostly unbroken. There were plenty of Prairie Chickens and Bob-whites there at that date, 1881. We used to trap the quail in drop traps, getting three or four at a time.—FLORENCE N. TOOTHAKER, Palisades, Colorado.

**Summer Notes from Central Iowa.**—On June 15, 1932, Walter Rosene, his son Walter Jr., and I made a trip to Long Pond, west of Perry, Iowa, for the census of breeding water-fowl. The pond was drying up rapidly at that time, and as a result only ten ducks could be found,

none of which were definitely found nesting. Two pairs of Mallards, two pairs of Blue-winged Teal, and one pair of Pintails were noted. Nests of Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot and Eastern Least Bittern were found; 36 Black Terns were counted at one time and three nests were found, but no doubt all were breeding.

A single full-plumaged male Wood Duck was seen at Fischer's Lake, 12 miles north of Des Moines, on June 6, 1932. Another trip to this same locality on June 14 failed to disclose the Wood Duck, but a female Hooded Merganser was seen on this occasion.

A pair of Scaup Ducks was seen at Fischer's Lake on June 6, and on June 24, 1932, a pair of Scaups was seen by Dr. F. L. R. Roberts and the writer on Swan Lake, Johnson County. Undoubtedly these were late stragglers or non-breeding birds.

H. M. Sanderson, Director of Information, Iowa State Fish and Game Commission, gave me the following report: An American Egret was seen with two Great Blue Herons, July 25, 1932, in Polk County twenty miles north of Des Moines, along the Des Moines River, by Wardens Mac Coons and Taylor Huston. Another report was received from the warden at Perry. A farmer by the name of Gilbert, living northwest of Perry, reported a bird which must have been of this species. With the increase of the American Egret, Little Blue Heron, and Snowy Egret on their southern breeding grounds, these birds may be looked for more frequently on this post-breeding migration.—PHILIP A. DU MONT, Des Moines, Iowa

**The American Egret in Emmet and Palo Alto Counties, Iowa.**—During the last week of July, 1932, it was reported that some kind of white heron was staying along the shores of Mud Lake, some ten miles southeast of Estherville. From the description it was evidently an American Egret. I visited the lake on July 30 and 31, but the bird had not been seen there during those two days. There were many Great Blue Herons at the lake with which the egret had been seen on previous days. On August 2 I received a telephone call from Fred Wolden of Graettinger stating that the Egret had been located on a prairie pond about a mile east of that town. It was discovered by Andrew Axelton and Melvin Bratrud, also of Graettinger. This place is about six miles south of Mud Lake. I at once drove to Graettinger, where these men and Kermit Jenson were waiting to go out and get another look at the egret.

When we arrived at the pond the bird had moved from where he was first seen, but soon he flew up from the rushes near the opposite side of the little pond. He accommodated us by perching on a fence post above the rushes; he continued to pose for us while we watched him through our glasses. We had a fine view of the bird, as we had the sun at our back; but as he was much nearer the other side of the pond, three of us circled the end of the slough, and by going through a cornfield, we approached much nearer under cover of a row of dense willows. Here we had a wonderful view of our visitor, though we were handicapped by having to look against the late afternoon sun. The bird was aware of our presence and in a few moments took to his wings. He circled around and lit in another pond but didn't permit us to approach him there. He soon took a course northward and was lost from view among the hills. We were well satisfied with the view we had of this beautiful bird, and we realized that ours had been an opportunity which rarely comes to residents of our locality, near the northern border of the state.

An American Egret stayed at High Lake in the same vicinity during August of 1911 and was often seen by residents. In August, 1926, one was also reported from the same locality. I did not see that one,



but there was little doubt of its being an egret.—B. O. WOLDEN, Estherville, Iowa.

**Increase of the Starling in Northeast Iowa.—**

"Vice is a creature of so frightful mien,  
That to be hated needs but to be seen;  
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

When Alexander Pope wrote the above oft-quoted words he was referring to an abstract quality, but the lines may well apply to the manner in which the pernicious Starling is spreading and extending its range out through the Middle West. We are now in the first stages, that of endurance, when our intelligence should rather cause us to hate the first appearance of the bird. The second stage, that of pity, cannot be far away when the bird will become a familiar part of our avian biota, and from that point to the third will be but a step when every nesting box, tree cavity and eave-trough will embrace the relentless creature to the exclusion of martin, Bluebird and woodpecker.

The rapidity with which the Starling is increasing west of the Mississippi River should give us occasion for much alarm. When I returned to Iowa last fall to spend the winter after an absence of nearly two years, the frequency with which Starlings were seen was surprising. So far as I know, the first actual record of the Starling for this section of Iowa was made at New Hampton when Louis Fliger caught one in a sparrow trap about the 8th of April, 1929. That was about a week or ten days after Professor Kubichek of Coe College had collected specimens at Oxford, farther south in the state. My own first observation of the Starling in Iowa was made on November 27, 1929, when I saw two individuals two miles north of New Hampton along the east fork of the Wapsipinicon River. I spent the remainder of that winter in Iowa but saw no more of the Starling at that time.

My fall and winter records for 1931 and 1932 are given below together with the numbers seen.

November 13, 3 at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, just across the river from Marquette, Iowa; November 18, 3 at Janesville, in Bremer County; December 9, 9 at Chickasaw, in Chickasaw County; December 23, 6 at Durango, in Dubuque County; January 5, 8 at Giard, in Clayton County; January 25, one at Chickasaw; January 27, 4 at Chickasaw; February 5, one at Chickasaw; February 6, 2 at Chickasaw; February 15, one at New Hampton, in Chickasaw County; February 25, 15 at Ionia, in Chickasaw County; March 2, one at Winthrop, in Buchanan County.

On January 29, I received a letter from Miss Kathleen M. Hempel of Elkader, Clayton County, saying that a couple of days before, a farmer living near Elkader brought her two Starlings for identification which he had shot from a flock of twelve.

Our treasurer, O. P. Allert, who lives in the old village of Giard, six miles west of McGregor, sends me the following observations which he has made during the winter, all at Giard, or between Giard and McGregor: January 5, 8 (this record is the same as mine as we were together on that occasion); January 6, 3; January 10, 2; January 13, 1; January 14, 1; January 15, 3; January 20, 2; February 27, 1; February 28, 4. On March 9, Mr. Allert saw one Starling two miles southeast of Monona, Clayton County; on March 30, he saw 3 Starlings about a church tower at Elgin, Fayette County; on June 27, he saw 4 Starlings in Clayton County. Mr. Allert also secured the first breeding record for Clayton County; a pair of Starlings nested in the cupola of the barn on the Henry Coobs farm, 4½ miles west of Marquette, in the summer of 1931 and 1932.

Fred J. Pierce of Winthrop adds his records to the Starling data of



northeastern Iowa. On February 21, 1932, he saw 4 Starlings about two miles southeast of Quasqueton, in Buchanan County, the first record for that county; on May 1, he saw 2 south of Winthrop in the same county. On May 22, he saw 2 north of Edgewood, in Clayton County.

Specimens which are killed or are found dead should be examined for bands, as thousands of these birds have been banded in the past few years, although it is perhaps more to be regretted that their necks were not wrung while the opportunity presented itself.—CHAS. J. SPIKER, New Hampton, Iowa.

**Field Characters of the Starling.**—The Starling appears to be increasing so rapidly in numbers in eastern Iowa that it is possible bird students in that part of the state are already well acquainted with it in the field. But for the observers in the central or western sections of the state these "characters" or field marks may be helpful.

The Starling is a medium-sized, chunky blackbird about the size and shape of a Meadowlark. The tail is short, the wings are short and pointed and appear to be set far back in relation to the body, therefore accentuating the tapering head and the moderately long, slender bill. The adult birds in the metallic plumage of the breeding season will be conspicuous with their yellow bills. The plumage of the young birds is a dull brown similar to that of a female Cowbird, but the Starling may always be distinguished by the light lining of the under-side of the wings as seen in flight and by the longer, narrow brownish bill.

The most distinct character is the behavior of a flock while in flight. These flocks, ranging in size from a few birds to a hundred or more, will fly up as a compact group, wheeling together, and then fly off with a very rapid and direct line of flight. The rapid wing beat is generally continuous with little or no undulation or gliding.

Nests are located in tree stubs, woodpecker holes, cupolas of barns or in any of the crevices about buildings. The notes are harsh and discordant and consist of a varied lot of whistles and squawks.

Judging from the numerous reports of breeding pairs and flocks of young birds in Iowa this bird must already be classed as a locally numerous breeding bird in the eastern half (as far west as Ogden) of the state and an irregular but not uncommon winter resident. Whether these birds are permanent residents in Iowa has not yet been determined. It is possible that during the winter most of the Iowa birds move southward or band into roving flocks and move about the state wherever food may be found.—PHILIP A. DU MONT, Des Moines, Iowa

**A Note from Allegany State Park, N. Y.**—The juncos that we know only as winter residents in Iowa are summer residents here. They nest along the roadside banks under the rootlets of grass or sod. Many of the nests are destroyed by snakes or foxes. The nest is left intact, but the eggs and adult birds are gone. I watched one nest ten days before it was destroyed. I am watching one now with three eggs in it, and I hope that no harm comes to it. The Black-throated Green Warblers have nested, and are staying to enjoy a few of the insects. I am not sure that they do not eat a few June berries. The Blue-headed Vireo, Blackburnian Warbler, Chesnut-sided Warbler, Canada Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Ovenbird, Hermit Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager are as common here as Bluebirds, titmice, and nuthatches are in Iowa.

The buildings here are located on a hillside. They are surrounded and shaded by sugar maple, birch, beech and hemlock trees. The ground floor is beautifully decorated with ferns and mosses, and the old pine

logs are wrapped in velvet green moss. At present wood sorrel and false violets are blooming, while various other woodland flowers have bloomed and are gone.—KATE E. LA MAR, Allegany School of Natural History, Quaker Bridge, New York, July 29, 1932.

## BIRD BOOKS

**"A Preliminary Catalog of the Birds of Missouri,"** by Otto Widmann. Twenty-five years ago, when Anderson's "Birds of Iowa" was being prepared for publication, a similar work on the "Birds of Missouri" was being prepared by Otto Widmann in our neighboring state. Both books were published in 1907, one by the Davenport Academy of Sciences, and the other by the Academy of Science of St. Louis. It is a noteworthy fact that each book is still doing overtime duty as the standard ornithological reference work for its respective state, later state lists not having appeared during the long lapse of time. Anderson lists 355 species for Iowa; Widmann, 353 species for Missouri. Anderson's hypothetical list contains 25 species; Widmann's 30 species. Anderson's book contains 292 pages; Widmann's 288 pages. The books are similar in size and, treating contiguous states, are quite analogous in general make-up. Widmann's book is of especial value to Iowa bird students because so many Iowa records are included, the series from Keokuk being a particularly large one (from a standpoint of latitude, southern Lee County in Iowa, where Keokuk is located, should perhaps have been a part of Missouri). In addition to the annotated list of species, "Birds of Missouri" contains brief chapters on bibliography, faunal areas, climate, topography, the decrease of birds, and bird protection.

We have been informed by the Academy of Science of St. Louis that "Birds of Missouri" is still available, at \$3.00 a copy in paper covers. We urge our members to secure copies while there is still opportunity. It is valuable for reference and today has considerable historical significance.—F. J. P.

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**"The Prairie Horned Lark,"** by Gayle B. Pickwell. Another, more recent, publication of the Academy of Science of St. Louis is this monographic study of the Prairie Horned Lark, published in 1931. The report is based principally upon field studies conducted by the author at Evanston, Ill., and Ithaca, N. Y. Chapters on history, migration, autumn and winter habits, reproduction, song, courtship, nesting, young, and molt, give a very complete account of the habits and life history of the bird. The detailed descriptions are supplemented by much statistical matter; further explanation and data are given by means of charts and pen drawings. An interesting section is the one taking up the ecology of the nesting site in relation to other breeding birds. During March, April and most of May, the Prairie Horned Lark was the only nesting bird in the open field; during June nine other species were nesting there. Twenty-eight non-breeding species procured their food on or above the fields where the larks nested. We heartily recommend the book to those who would know more about the habits of one of our common Iowa birds. It contains 160 pages, including a comprehensive bibliography and complete index, and there are 34 half-tone plates. It is sold by the Academy for \$2.00 a copy in paper covers.—F. J. P.

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**"Ornithology of the Oneida Lake Region,"** by Dayton Stoner. This large volume deals with the late spring and summer birds of an area in New York, with especial reference to their ecological relations, based on field work done during 1928 and 1929. Dr. Stoner's scholarly



report is a masterpiece of ornithological thoroughness and is a credit to the state which has made possible its publication. Our space permits us to give the work only brief mention, but we hope that many copies will come into Iowa, and that bird students here will make use of the valuable material contained in the book. The volume contains 497 pages, 2 colored plates, 117 halftones, and one map. It is sold for \$2.50 a copy (paper covers) by the Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station, Syracuse, N. Y. We rather envy this state whose financial resources enable it to publish pretentious books of this sort on its bird life. Incidentally, Dr. Stoner was formerly a resident of Iowa City and a professor on the staff of the University of Iowa.—F. J. P.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Our Secretary, Miss LaMar, spent the summer at the Allegany School of Natural History, in Allegany State Park, N. Y., where she took courses in field ecology and bird study. She reports a very interesting and profitable summer.

William Youngworth, Sioux City ornithologist, accompanied the veteran naturalist Fred M. Dille on a collecting trip in western Nebraska in June.

Philip A. DuMont, formerly of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and more recently of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, has returned to Iowa. He has received an appointment as research assistant under Prof. Homer R. Dill, Director of the Museum of Natural History, University of Iowa, and will spend the coming year in re-classifying the collections of bird skins at Iowa City. Mr. DuMont spent a portion of the summer in going over the collections of Iowa birds in various museums in the state. While he attended the Wild Life School at McGregor in August, he had opportunity to visit Oscar Allert, our Treasurer, and to thoroughly examine his fine collection of birds and butterflies, of which he says "Allert has one of the finest collections of Iowa birds that can be found in the state, and I think he is doing more real work towards a solution of the problems of subspecific occurrence than any other person in the state; his series of Red-wings, water-thrushes, sparrows, and hawks are going to be invaluable."

Prof. W. F. Kubichek of Coe College spent a portion of the early summer on the lakes of South Dakota where he amplified his series of moving pictures of water birds and made studies of other species. He was also one of the speakers at the Wild Life School during August.

The Iowa State Fish and Game Commission has issued a mimeographed leaflet entitled "Know Iowa Hawks." It contains five pages of useful information, and since it is intended for free distribution, it should prove quite educational if given adequate circulation.

A new member of the faculty of the State Teachers College at Ypsilanti, Mich., is Chas. J. Spiker, one of the founders of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Charley, as he is known to most of us, has spent the past summer in doing bird survey work in the Catskill Mountain region of New York. As a field naturalist for the Roosevelt Wild Life Experiment Station of Syracuse, N. Y., he has spent many past summers in doing similar work in various parts of New York State, including the Adirondacks and Finger Lakes Region. The results of his studies are published by the Roosevelt Station. The first of his

papers was entitled "A Biological Reconnaissance of the Peterboro Swamp and the Labrador Pond Areas," published in March, 1931, and others are to follow. He has been visiting old friends in Iowa during the early part of September.

The Editor would like information as to the number of sets of "The Iowa Ornithologist" that are now in existence. Files of this magazine published forty years ago seem to be quite rare today. If you know where there is a complete or nearly complete set in a private or an institutional library, the Editor would much appreciate your notifying him of this fact, as he is placing this information on file and expects to publish the list of sets when it seems to be fairly complete.

Dr. Paul L. Errington, who has been connected with the University of Wisconsin for some time past, has joined the faculty of Iowa State College at Ames, where he has charge of the game bird survey and propagation work of the college.

New members since our last issue are: Mrs. Esther H. Powers, Iowa City, Iowa; E. J. Feuling, New Hampton, Iowa; Paul L. Errington, Ames, Iowa; Frederick A. Hemphill, Elizabeth, N. J.; and Prof. H. Arnold Bennett, Buffalo, N. Y. Prof. Bennett is a son of the late Rev. George Bennett, founder of the McGregor Wild Life School, who died at McGregor in August, 1928, at the close of the School's session of that year. Prof. Bennett sends us a gift of five dollars and says: "I am sure that my father would be enheartened to know that the cause of wild life conservation, which he championed, is being urged through your publication. Kindly accept the enclosed contribution, in memory of my father, towards your good work." We are grateful to Prof. Bennett for this gift.

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